148 of the said Act in March, 1989, as per the details given below:

Name of the concern	Assessment years
1. M/s. Indian Express Newspapers (Bombay) Pvt. Ltd.	1973-74tol980 81
2. M/s. Express Traders	1976-77 to 1979-80
3. M/s. Express Newspapers Ltd., Madras	1972-73 to 1979-80

These reassessment proceedings were initialed independent of and not as a sequel to the searches conducted on the Indian Express Group, in March 1989.

Role of Regional Rural Banks in Rural Development

970. DR YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Regional Rural Banks are starved of deposits and are thus unable to play their intended role in rural development;

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to attract more deposits in these banks;

(c) what is the deposit mobilisation record of these banks for the last five years;

(d) what are the reasons which prevent Government from offering a higher rate of interest on deposits with R.R.Bs as a measure of rural development and improvement of the lot of the rural investors; and

(e) whether there is any proposal to merge the R.R.Bs with the public sector commercial banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) (b) and (d) National Bank for Agriculture & Rural Development (NABARD) has reported that there has been a steady increase not only of total aggregate deposits of regional rural banks (RRBs) but also in average deposits per RRB and per branch.

Regional Rural Banks have been permitted to offer interest of half per cent more than that is given by the commercial banks.

(c) The total aggregate deposits of the RRBs as at the end of December during last five years are set out below: —

Year	Amount of deposits (Rs. in lakhs)	Growth over previous year
1983	67785	35%
1984	95,997	42%
1985	128562	34%
1986	171494	33%
1987	2305.82	34%

"to

(e) There is no proposal at present to merge the Regional Rural Banks with Commercial Banks.

Asian Development Bank Financial Assistance for Setting up of All Weather Gopalpur Port in Orissa

971. SHRI BASUDEB MOHAPATRA. Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Asian Development Bank has decided to extend financial assistance for the setting up of an all weather Gopalpur Port in Orissa;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) whether the proposal has been cleared by the Central Water Power Research Station, Pune?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Government Directives on Postings of Staff

972. SHRI YALLA SESI BHUSHANA RAO : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether there is any Government directive to keep both the husband and wife at the same station if both of them are working in Government departments/ public sector undertakings;

(b) whether these orders are extendable to associate banks of State Bank of India as well, if so, the details thereof;

(c) -whether Management of State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur have received a number of requests for transfer on the aforesaid ground during the year 1988-•89;

(d) if so, the number of such requests received and disposed of during the last six months;

(e) whether there is any delay in disposing of such requests; and

(f) if so, what action has been taken to expedite the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) and (b) Department of Personnel & Training of Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pension have issued guidelines to enable the cadre controlling authorities to consider the requests from spouses for posting at the same station. Keeping in view the spirit of these guidelines, public sector banks have been advised to consider the requests for posting of spouses at the same station where both employees happen to be employed in banks subject to administrative convenience, availability of vacancies etc.

(c) to (f) State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur has reported that they have received 36 transfer requests from spouses for posting at the same station during 1988-'89, out of which 12 transfers have been effected so far and the remaining cases have been noted for consideration at an appropriate time.

Loans to Farmers by Nationalised Banks

973. SHRI PRITHIBI MAJHI; Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the nationalised banks have extended any loans to the farmers for agricultural purposes during the last three years; if so, what are the details thereof, yearwise; and

(b) what steps are being contemplated for the recovery of such loans disbursed by the banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) The outstanding amount of agricultural advances of public sector basks